MEMORIAL-ILLUSTRATED

DRAWER 13

LINCOLN MEMORIAL

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Washington, D.C.

Lincoln Memorial
Illustrations

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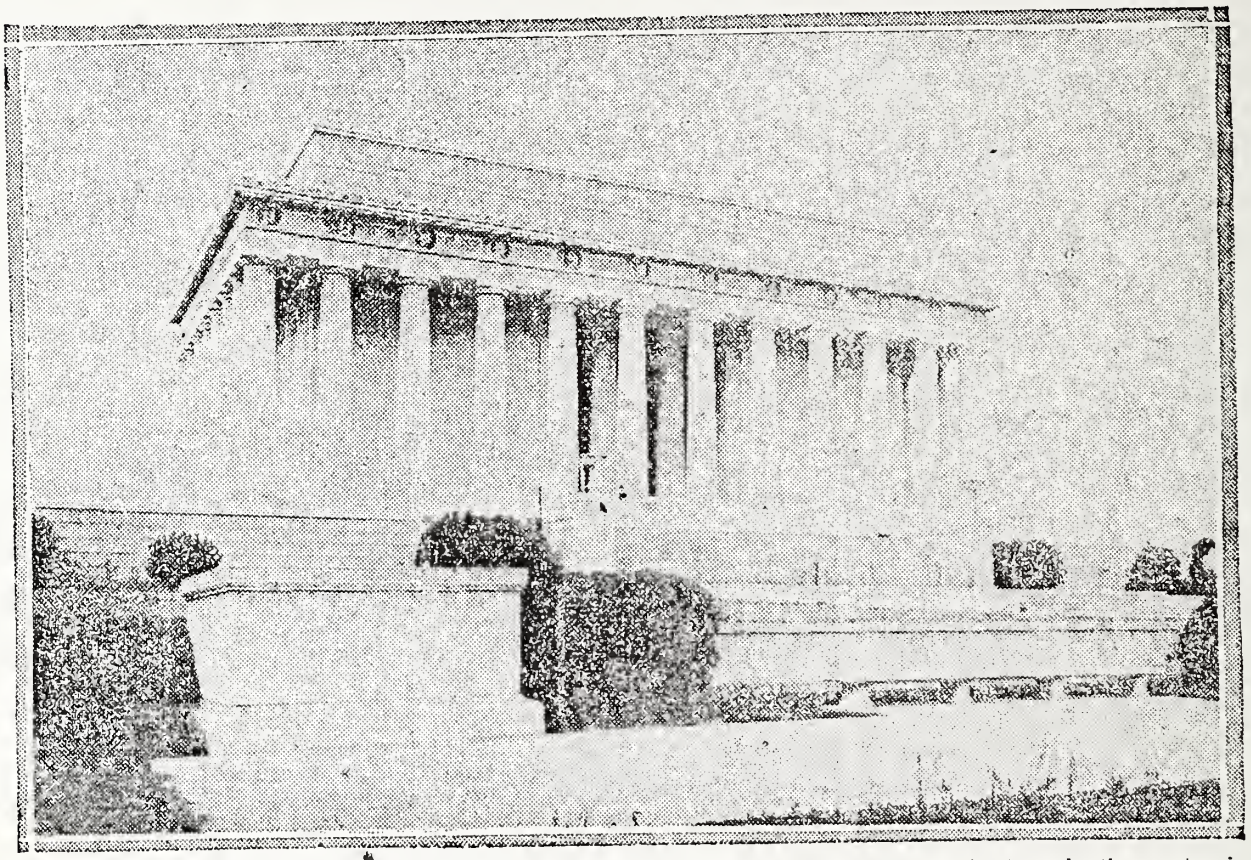
Lincoln Memorial Is Art Masterpiece



The Lincoln Memorial, located in Potomac park, Washington, D. C., is said by architects to be the masterpiece of all public buildings in the country. Its construction was begun on Lincoln's birthday anniversary in 1914, the total cost being approximately $3,000,000. It will be formally dedicated soon.

This monument to Abraham Lincoln is a large rectangular building of white marble designed by Henry Bacon, a New York architect. It is composed of four principal features, a statue of the man, a memorial of his Gettysburg address, a memorial of his second inaugural address and a symbol of the union of the United States. Within the building, the most impressive object is a statue of Lincoln by Daniel Chester Webster French, a New York sculptor.

"This memorial," declared Joseph S. C. Blackburn, a Southern officer during the Civil War and a member of the government commission of fine arts which provided for the memorial, "will show that Lincoln is now regarded as the greatest of all Americans. He is so held by the South as well as the North."

The Minneapolis Sunday Tribune
Feb-13-1921

THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL*

By William Howard Taft

Chief Justice of the United States

THE American people have waited fifty-seven years for a national memorial to Abraham Lincoln. Those years have faded the figures of his contemporaries, and he stands grandly alone.

His life and character in the calmer and juster vista of half a century inspire a higher conception of what is suitable to commemorate him.

Justice, truth, patience, mercy, and love of his kind; simplicity, courage, sacrifice, and confidence in God, were his moral qualities. Clarity of thought and intellectual honesty, self-analysis and strong inexorable logic, supreme common sense, a sympathetic but unerring knowledge of human nature, imagination and limpid purity of style, with a poetic rhythm of the Psalms—these were his intellectual and cultural traits.

His soul and heart and brain and mind had all these elements, but their union in him had a setting that baffles description.

His humility; his self-abnegation and devotion; his patience under grievous disappointment; his agony of spirit in the burden he had to carry; his constant sadness, lightened at intervals with a rare humor all his own; the abuse and ridicule of which he was the subject; his endurance in a great cause of small obstructive minds; his domestic sorrows, and finally his tragic end, form the story of a passion and give him a personality that is as vivid in the hearts of the people as if it were but yesterday.

We feel a closer touch with him than with living men. The influence he still wields, one may say with all reverence, has a Christlike character. It has spread to the four quarters of the globe.

The oppressed and lowly of all peoples, as liberty and free government spread, pronounce his name with awe, and cherish his assured personal sympathy as a source of hope. Their leaders quote his glowing words of patient courage, of sympathy with the downtrodden, of dependence on God's wisdom and justice, and of his never-ceasing prayer for liberty through the rule of the people.

The harmony of his message with every popular aspiration for freedom proves his universality. It was this which Stanton was inspired to predict when, as Lincoln lay dead, he said, "He now belongs to the ages."

His own life without favoring chance in preparation for the task which Providence was to put on him, his early humble surroundings, his touch with the soil, his oneness with the plain people, and the wonder that out of these he could become what he was and is, give us a soul-stirring pride that the world has come to know him and to love him as we do.

We like to dwell on the fact that his associates did not see him as he was when on earth, and that it was for generations born after he was gone to feel his real greatness and to be moved by his real personality.

A HALO OF LIGHT ABOUT HIS HEAD

Not with the lowly only, but with all—rich or poor, ignorant or learned, weak or powerful, untutored or of literary genius—has this aura about Lincoln's head at his death grown into a halo of living light.

Therefore it is well that half a century should pass before his people's national tribute to him takes form in marble, that it should wait until a generation instinct with the growing and deepening perception of the real Lincoln has had time to develop an art adequate to the expression of his greatness.

The years immediately following the Civil War were not favorable to art, and the remains of that period in our Capital City and elsewhere show it.

But new impulses in the expansion of our country's energies were soon directed toward better things. Our expositions

*An address delivered by Mr. Taft as Chairman of the Lincoln Memorial Commission on the occasion of the presentation of the completed Memorial to the President of the United States, May 30, 1922.

Photograph by Charles Martin

THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL

"The proportions of the Memorial are so fine that its great mass and height and length and breadth are suppressed in its unity."

have marked the steps in that progress. They called together men who had been struggling singly to practice, preach, and bring home to us real conceptions of art and beauty in architecture and sculpture.

For fifteen years following the Centennial at Philadelphia, the nucleus there begun grew until at the Columbian Exposition at Chicago, in 1892 and 1893, there were gathered a group of artists who in the development of civic planning, landscape architecture, and monumental and sculptural beauty were the peers of any.

Burnham, McKim, Olmsted the elder, Saint-Gaudens, Atwood, and Millet were the leading figures. In 1894 they organized the American Academy in Rome for the graduate education of American students, where before entering upon their professional careers they should study thoroughly that reservoir of Greek art, the greatest of antiquity, which is at Rome, where "the noble buildings are a forest, the animals of bronze, a herd; the statues, a population in marble."

THE PLACING OF THE MEMORIAL

In 1901, under the generous and far-seeing favor of James McMillan, in charge in the Senate of the affairs of the District of Columbia, a commission was appointed to bridge over the period since Washington and L'Enfant's plan for the capital, and on the basis of that plan to enlarge and give greater scope to the beauty of this seat of government.

The four men who engaged in this work were, three of them, the creators of the "Court of Honor" and the "White City" at the Columbian Exposition, and the fourth, the younger Olmsted, was worthy of his sire. As a new feature in that plan, and referring to the place upon which we stand, they said in their report:

"Crowning the *rond-point*, as the Arc de Triomphe crowns the Place de l'Étoile at Paris, should stand a memorial erected to the memory of that one man in our history as a nation who is worthy to be named with George Washington—Abraham Lincoln.

"Whatever may be the exact form selected for the memorial to Lincoln, in type it should possess the quality of universality, and also it should have a character essentially different from that of any monument either now existing in the District or hereafter to be erected.

"The type which the Commission has in mind is a great portico of Doric columns rising from an unbroken stylobate. This portico, while affording a point of vantage from which one obtains a commanding outlook, both upon the river and eastward to the Capitol, has for its chief function to support a panel bearing an inscription taken either from the Gettysburg speech or from some one of the immortal messages of the savior of the Union."

Here, then, was the first conception of the Memorial we dedicate to-day. Not until 1911 was the idea carried forward. Then two sons of Illinois, Shelby M. Cullom and Joseph G. Cannon, fathered the bill for the creation of the present Commission, under whose official supervision this work has been done.

The Commission claims no credit for it except that it asked those who knew what to do, and did it. They consulted the Fine Arts Commission, made up of Burnham, Millet, Olmsted, French, Hastings, Gilbert, and Moore, who urged the present site and recommended as the man to design and build it Henry Bacon, the student and disciple of McKim. McKim was the dean of the architects of this country, and did most among us to bring the art of Greece to appreciation and noble use. Bacon has been his worthy successor.

TEN YEARS REQUIRED TO BUILD THE MEMORIAL

For ten years the structure has been rising. From the solid rock beneath the level of the Potomac, 50 feet below the original grade, it reaches a total of 122 feet above that grade.

The platform at its base is 204 feet long and 134 feet wide. The colonnade is 188 feet long and 118 feet wide, the columns 44 feet high and 7 feet 5 inches in diameter at their base. The memorial hall is 156 feet long and 84 feet wide.

The proportions of the memorial are so fine that its great mass and height and length and breadth are suppressed in its unity.

The outside columns are the simple Doric, the inside columns the simple Ionic. The marble of the structure is

Photograph by Charles Martin

AMONG THE COLUMNS OF THE LINCOLN MEMORIAL

Surrounding the walls of the Memorial is a colonnade forming a symbol of the Union, each column representing a State—36 in all—one for each State existing at the time of Lincoln's death. The columns are 44 feet high and 7 feet 5 inches in diameter at their base. On the walls appearing above the colonnade and supported at intervals by eagles are 48 memorial festoons, one for each State existing to-day (see page 598).

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A SEAPLANE ALIGHTS ON THE MEMORIAL REFLECTING BASIN

In winter, when the shallow water freezes, the basin is an ideal rendezvous for skaters.

from the Colorado Yule mine, remarkable for its texture and the purity of its white, and for the size of the drums which make the columns noteworthy in the architecture of the world.

FRENCH THE SCULPTOR, GUÉRIN THE MURAL PAINTER

The colossal figure of the Beloved in Georgia marble, the work of another of the group of artists of whom I have spoken, Daniel Chester French, one of our greatest sculptors, fills the memorial hall with an overwhelming sense of Lincoln's presence, while the mural decorations of another great American artist, Jules Guérin, with their all-embracing allegory, crown the whole sacred place.

The site is at the end of the axis of the Mall, the commanding and noteworthy spine of the L'Enfant plan.

Burnham, McKim, and Saint-Gaudens, who followed this plan through to its triumph, took the Mall under their peculiar protection.

It was they who caused that wonderful group of the Silent Soldier and his battling armies to be put upon this axis at the foot of the Capitol which he did so much to defend.

It was they who struggled against encroachments upon this capital feature of our wonderful seat of government.

It was they who put this noble structure we celebrate to-day where it is.

They sought the judgment of John Hay, secretary and biographer of Lincoln, statesman and poet. He answered:

"The place of honor is on the main axis of the plan. Lincoln, of all Americans next to Washington, deserves this place of honor. He was of the immortals. You must not approach too close to the immortals. His monument should stand alone, remote from the common habitations of man, apart from the business and turmoil of the city—isolated, distinguished, and serene. Of all the sites, this one, near the Potomac, is most suited to the purpose."

THE IDEAL OF GREAT ARTISTS HAS FOUND EXPRESSION

And now, Mr. President, the ideal of these great American artists has found

Photograph by U. S. Signal Corps

THE LINCOLN STATUE

Standing before the colossal figure in the Memorial Building, while assistants put the finishing touches to the statue on the day before the dedication, are Henry Bacon, the architect, and Daniel Chester French, the sculptor. Mr. French is nearer the ladder.

expression in the memorial as you see it. It is a magnificent gem set in a lovely valley between the hills, commanding them by its isolation and its entrancing beauty, an emblem of the purity of the best period of the Greek art in the simple Doric, the culmination of the highest art of which America is capable, and therefore fit to commemorate a people's love for the Nation's savior and its great leader.

Here, on the banks of the Potomac, the boundary between the two sections whose conflict made the burden, passion, and triumph of his life, it is peculiarly appropriate that it should stand.

MEMORIAL MARKS RESTORATION OF BROTHERLY LOVE

Visible in its distant beauty from the Capitol, whose great dome typifies the Union which he saved; seen in all its grandeur from Arlington, where lie the Nation's honored dead who fell in the conflict, Union and Confederate alike, it marks the restoration of the brotherly love of the two sections in this memorial of one who is as dear to the hearts of the South as to those of the North.

The Southerner knows that the greatest misfortune in all the trials of that section was the death of Lincoln. Had he lived, the consequences of the war would not have been as hard for them to bear, the wounds would have been more easily healed, the trying days of reconstruction would have been softened.

Rancor and resentment were no part of his nature. In all the bitterness of that conflict, tried as he was, no word fell from his lips which told of hatred, malice, or unforgiving soul.

Here is a shrine at which all can worship. Here an altar upon which the sacrifice was made in the cause of Liberty. Here a sacred religious refuge in which those who love country and love God can find inspiration and repose.

Mr. President, in the name of the Commission, I have the honor to deliver this Lincoln Memorial into your keeping.

THE

John Hancock FIELD

FEBRUARY ·· 1924

LINCOLN MEMORIAL

WASHINGTON, D.C.

ABRAHAM LINCOLN

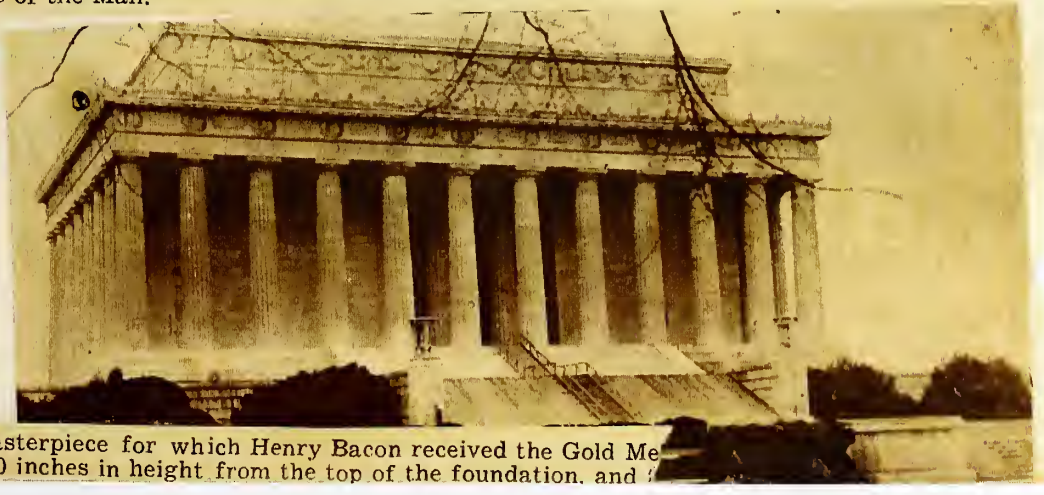
1809-1865

THE Lincoln Memorial, described as expressing "in enduring beauty the faith of a nation in an immortal leader," ranks as one of the great achievements of American art. A classic Greek temple, vast, simple, dignified, it rises from what a few decades ago was Potomac swampland to face the Washington Monument and the Capitol.

Inside the great hall the dominating feature is Daniel Chester French's heroic statue of Lincoln, nineteen feet in height. Before that figure, seated as if in meditation on the problems of the Republic whose life he saved, the visitor stands in reverence. The effect is due not alone to the genius of the sculptor but also to the skill of electrical engineers. The original plans for the memorial, begun in 1914 and dedicated in 1922 after the expenditure of $3,000,000, provided for natural illumination from windows in the ceiling. It was found, however, that light from the entrance cast shadows which distorted the figure, and an elaborate lighting system was devised, with twenty-four floodlights and dozens of smaller lights. The illumination, regulated by attendants as the natural light changes, is concealed so skillfully that the spectator is unaware of it.

The 128th anniversary of Lincoln's birth, on Feb. 12, 1809, will be celebrated throughout the nation next Friday.

From the entrance of the memorial the visitor looks across a reflecting pool toward the Washington Monument and the Capitol along the axis of the Mall.



At the Left—The memorial, the masterpiece for which Henry Bacon received the Gold Me
League of Architects in 1923, is 79 feet 10 inches in height from the top of the foundation, and

ANNUAL REPORT 1969

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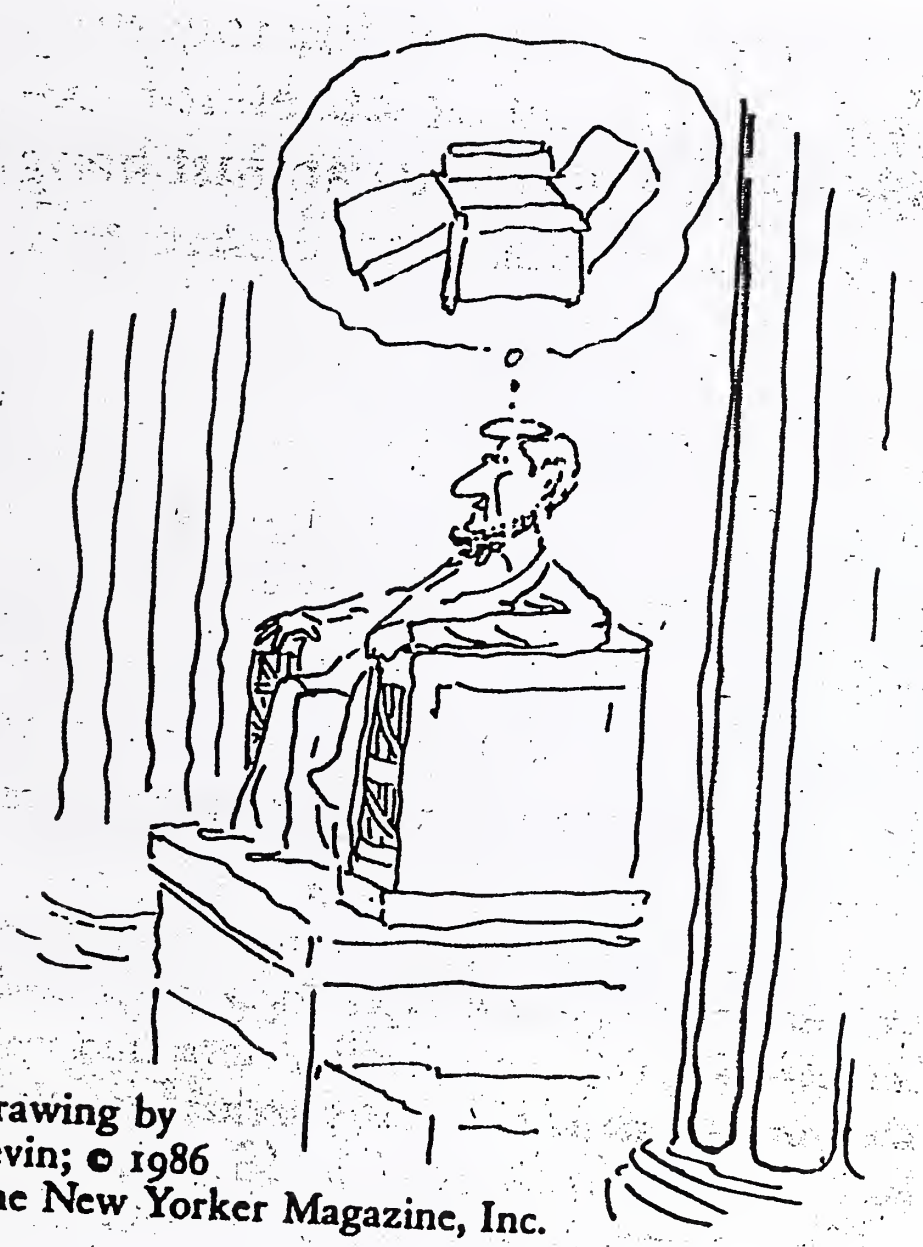
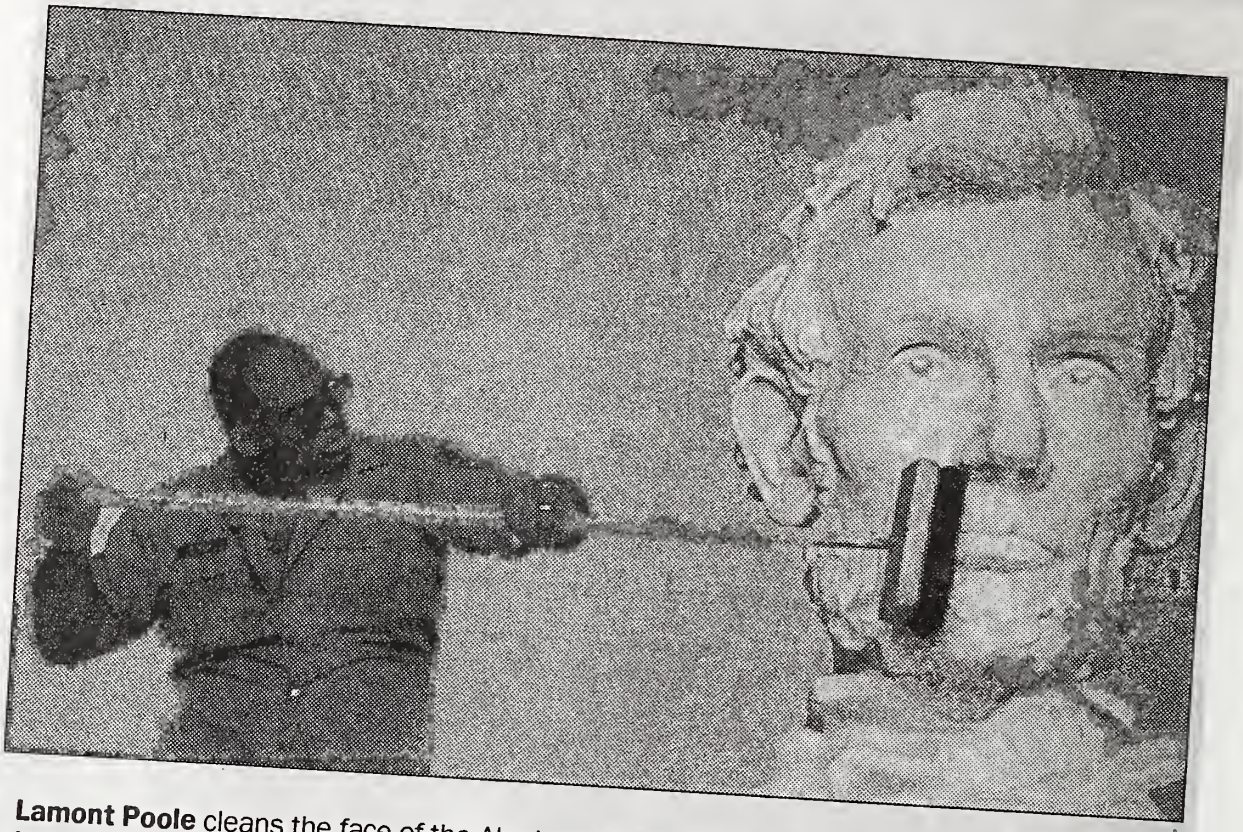


Drawing by
Levin; © 1986
The New Yorker Magazine, Inc.

GITCHY-GITCHY-GOO!



Lamont Poole cleans the face of the Abraham Lincoln statue yesterday at the Lincoln Memorial during the monument's annual cleaning.

By the Associated Press

The News Sentinel Wed. Aug 3, 1994 Pg 14

IN THIS TEMPLE
AS IN THE HEARTS OF THE PEOPLE
FOR WHOM HE SAVED THE UNION
THE MEMORY OF ABRAHAM LINCOLN
IS ENSHRINED FOREVER